



TEMPLE OF SET

Post Office Box 470307
San Francisco, CA 94147
U.S.A.

Internet: SetExec@pacbell.net
Website: <http://www.xeper.org>

General Information and Admissions Policies

© 1986-2003CE Temple of Set

[This document is updated as of February 2003 CE.
If this copy is over a year old, please request a new
copy, or download one from the Temple website.]

Thank you for your inquiry. The Temple of Set is an institution unlike any you have previously encountered. Before you can make an informed decision concerning possible affiliation, it is necessary for you to consider the history of the Temple, its basic tenets, its current design and programs, and the benefits and obligations incurred by each Setian.

History of the Temple

While the Temple of Set as an organization was formally incorporated in 1975 CE, its magical and philosophical roots are prehistoric, originating in mankind's first apprehension that there is "something different" about the human race - a sense of **self-consciousness** that places humanity apart from and above all other known forms of life.

Ancient religions - of which those of Egypt are generally acknowledged the eldest - either exalted or feared this self-consciousness. Those which exalted it took the position that the human *psyche* is capable of opposition to and domination of the forces of nature. Those fearing it warned man that such a presumption of independence would be sinful and dangerous. Therefore, they said, such "will to power" should be concealed, sublimated - and if necessary punished and exterminated - that mankind might return to an Eden-like "state of nature" untroubled by the burdens of having to take responsibility for decisions, judgments, and actions based upon an essentially personal determination of "good" and "evil".

The *psyche*-worshipping religions were more intellectually demanding than their nature-worshipping counterparts, since it is more difficult to reason a path through one's span of conscious existence than it is to be swept along by a current of semi-rational stimulus and response. The reasoning religions - or schools of initiatory philosophy - attained levels of abstract knowledge that made them mysterious to the masses. In a few societies, such as Egypt and Greece, such groups were respected and admired. More often, however, their exclusive elitism and "supernatural" activities made them objects of resentment and persecution.

While all philosophical schools embraced the *psychocentric* consciousness to some degree, there were a very few that made it avowedly and explicitly the focus of their attention. The divine personifications (“gods”) of such schools have come down to us as symbols of what most Western religions, worshippers of non-consciousness, consider the supreme “evil”: the Prince of Darkness in his many forms. Of these the most ancient is Set, whose Priesthood can be traced to predynastic times. Images of Set have been dated to ca. 3200 BCE, with astronomically-based estimates of inscriptions dating to ca. 5000 BCE.

The original Priesthood of Set in ancient Egypt survived for twenty-five recorded dynasties (ca. 3200-700 BCE). It was one of the two central priesthoods in predynastic times, the other being that of HarWer (“Horus the Elder”). Unification of Egypt under both philosophical systems resulted in the nation’s being known as the “Two Kingdoms” and in its Pharaohs wearing the famous “Double Crown” of Horus and Set.

Originally a circumpolar/stellar deity portrayed as a cyclical counterpart to the Solar Horus, Set was later recast as an evil principle by the cults of Osiris and Isis. During the XIX and XX Dynasties Set returned as the Pharaonic patron, but by the XXV Dynasty (ca. 700 BCE) a new wave of Osirian persecution led to the final destruction of the original Priesthood of Set. When the Hebrews emigrated from Egypt during the XIX Dynasty, however, they took with them a caricature of Set: “Satan” (possibly from the hieroglyphic *Set-hen*, one of the god’s formal titles).

Originally a sort of “prosecuting angel for YHVH”, the Hebrew Satan was changed by Christianity into a personification of everything God was not - and since God was supposed to be “good”, Satan was necessarily “bad”. Alluring or mysterious deities from religions competing with early Christianity - such as the Hellenic/Roman Mysteries and the Persian Mithraic faith - were also “bad”, hence the Christian Satan was decorated with many of their characteristics, such as Pan’s horns & cloven hoofs. Non-Christian gods generally were redefined as Christian “demons” and given a place in the Christian “Hell” (another name stolen and perverted, this time from ancient Norse mythology).

Christian propaganda notwithstanding, there is no record of any actual “Satanic religious underground” throughout the course of Christian European history. The **myth** of such a “witch cult”, however, was promoted and actively used by the Christian churches to terrorize their followers into docile obedience and to eliminate those who could not be threatened. The number of accused “Satanists” tortured and burned to death in medieval and Renaissance Europe will never be known conclusively, but estimates run as high as 13 million. Many European museums still display the grisly, almost unbelievably cruel devices used in such torture, and detailed records of the “trials” and “confessions” of the victims survive in shameful abundance.

Cases of torture, murder, and genocidal extermination of “infidels” and “heathens” in other areas of the world similarly abound - and stand collectively in testimony to the appalling legacy of the world’s major monotheistic religions. It must further be remembered that the more “tolerant” climate of modern times did not come about through the wishes of conventional churches themselves, but rather through their increasing rejection by a mankind exhausted by religious warfare and terrified by the wanton viciousness of such establishments as the “Holy Office” (better known as the Inquisition).

If the “Enlightenment” of the 17th and 18th centuries succeeded in reducing Christianity - the dominant monotheism of Europe - to a secular moral propaganda device, it was not until the late 19th century that the so-called “Black Arts” began to be tolerated, and then only in their most simplistic and socially innocuous forms. From Freemasonry

came a ceremonial magical offshoot - Rosicrucianism - which became increasingly more sophisticated in the Rosicrucian Society of England (S.R.I.A.) and then in the famous Hermetic Order of the Golden Dawn (G.'.D.').

In 1904 an Adept of the G.'.D.' named Aleister Crowley broke away from that disintegrating body to form his own Order of the *Astrum Argenteum* (A.'.A.'). To the Rosicrucian/ceremonial magical philosophy of the G.'.D.', Crowley added first a strong emphasis on attainment of the highest level of self-consciousness ("Knowledge and Conversation of the Holy Guardian Angel") and later the Masonic/sexual magic practices of Germany's Order of Oriental Templars (O.T.O.). The latter practices, together with Crowley's cavalier lifestyle, brought him public notoriety. His organizations survived his 1947 death only in highly-fragmented and doctrinally simplistic factions.

In 1966 a San Francisco sorcerer named Anton Szandor LaVey founded the Church of Satan as a medium for the study of the Black Arts and as a statement of indignation repudiating the religious hypocrisy of conventional society. This event marks the creation of Satanism as a religion in its own right. Publicly its "Satan" was not the evil scarecrow of Christian myth, but rather a champion of anti-hypocrisy - a crusader against the corruption and moral bankruptcy of society, which LaVey blamed largely upon Christianity. In another, more private context, the Satan of the Church of Satan was understood to be an authentic metaphysical presence: a being not evil, but rather independent, assertive, and creative - a true Prince of Darkness after the imagery of Milton, Blake, Baudelaire, and Twain.

The Church remained principally a San Francisco phenomenon for its first four years, then during 1970-1974 branched out across the United States and Canada with local "Grottos" headed by those ordained to the Satanic Priesthood (the Priesthood of Mendes - named after a city in Ptolemaic Egypt whose hedonistic festivals particularly scandalized the prudishness of the early Christian church).

The Church of Satan's attitude towards magic was more pragmatic and utilitarian than that of such mystically-based organizations as the G.'.D.' and A.'.A.'. It saw no need for exhaustive studies into the often incoherent and inconsistent concepts of the Cabala, nor did it see anything extraordinarily significant in sex-magic. Rather it chose to approach the occult arts and sciences more rationally and even scientifically, employing "Occam's razor" to design and conduct Workings of ritual magic that were simple and direct, yet effective.

In this the Church was generally successful, but it continued to experience increasing difficulty with the basic nihilism and negative connotations of its religious imagery. It could not escape the self-assumed limitation of being "anti-Christian" in a society in which Christianity - and its "evil scarecrow" concept of Satan - were overwhelmingly predominant. Simultaneously the Church began to feel constrained by even its own redefinition of Satanism, as the parameters of philosophy and metaphysics extend far beyond the conceptual and symbolic limits of the Judaic/Christian tradition.

The Satanic religion proposes to raise the individual to personal godhood, free from enslavement to any other "God" [or gods]. Unfortunately this is a question not just of power, but also of ethics, morality, and psychological maturity. The Church of Satan's initial prescriptions - as outlined in LaVey's 1969 book *The Satanic Bible* - were used by some as a basis for metaphysical growth, but by others as merely an excuse for egoistic irresponsibility. The Church suffered periodically from petty crises and scandals among the general membership, and finally Anton LaVey lost confidence in its organizational viability. In 1975 he made a decision to redesign it as a nonfunctional vehicle for his personal expression, exploitation, and financial income. Until his 1997 death he continued to

cynically advertise it as a “religion”, and to sell “memberships” and “priesthoods” under this guise.

LaVey’s 1975 corruption of the Church of Satan was emphatically rejected by the majority of the Priesthood, who immediately resigned from the Church in protest and denied its legitimacy as an authentic Satanic religion henceforth. The senior Initiate invoked the Prince of Darkness in quest of a new Mandate to preserve and enhance the more noble concepts which the Church had conceived and outlined. That Mandate was given in the form of *The Book of Coming Forth by Night* - a statement by that entity, in his most ancient semblance as Set, ordaining creation of the Temple of Set to succeed the Church. The Temple was incorporated in California as a nonprofit church in 1975, receiving both state and federal recognition and tax-exemption later that same year. It has since remained the sole “Satanic” religious institution possessing these legal credentials.

The Temple of Set and Satanism

Q1: What is “Satanism”?

A1: Satanism is the belief in the existence of Satan as a sentient being or spirit in the universe, and the worship of Satan and obedience to his perceived principles, standards, and goals. As Satan is defined as a metaphysical being - Devil or Archangel, such belief in him constitutes a religion rather than a rational philosophy or ideology.

Q2: Can one be a Satanist without believing in the existence of Satan?

A2: Not if words are to have their generally-accepted meanings. A Satanist is one who believes in the existence of Satan, just as a Christian is one who believes in the existence of Jesus Christ, a Buddhist in the existence of Buddha, and a Muslim in the existence of Mohammed. A person who claims to be a “Satanist” but who denies Satan is simply using the title for ulterior motives such as personal glamorization or commercial exploitation. If that person denies the existence of all metaphysical beings, he is by definition an atheist, not a Satanist. If he professes to believe sometimes and not others, when it may suit his convenience, he is a hypocrite.

Q3: If the Temple of Set does not believe in Judæo/Christian/Islamic mythology, why does it call itself a “Satanic” religion?

A3: For the last two thousand years most of the social cultures in which the Temple currently exists have been dominated by one or more branches of Judæo/Christianity. This influence is far more pervasive than most people consciously realize, extending into these societies’ most basic assumptions about group & individual relationships, law, justice, ethics, social mores, family units, cosmology, and metaphysics. It is easy to not be a member of a Christian church, or to call oneself a non-Christian; it is far more difficult to escape from J/C social conditioning.

Within this climate many of the aspects of Set are symbolized in religious imagery by the **positive** attributes of the J/C Satan. While Judaism, Christianity, and Islam created their “Satan” distortion of the Set *neter* of ancient Egypt in order to fashion an “evil scarecrow” to intimidate and control their societies, they could not help endowing “Satan” with such Setian attributes as independence, creativity, honesty, artistry, and

intellectual genius - as these **same** attributes, except in severely controlled and approved forms, are “sins against God” in J/C/I culture.

Therefore many persons of Setian disposition and potential first became aware of their true nature through an unusual interest in and attraction to “Satan” and Satanic imagery. [This was the case of the Temple of Set as a whole, which from 1966 to 1975 - as the Church of Satan - was exploring the Left-Hand Path from within J/C terminology.] Hence it is sometimes necessary to use the “Satanic” metaphor to initially communicate with J/C-socialized individuals concerning the Setian interests and capabilities they are otherwise incapable of expressing. Once such persons understand a little more what they are actually awakening in themselves, they are more easily able to recognize and jettison the entire cage of J/C reference-points, then enter a much larger universe of thought and being as **Setians**.

The Contemporary Environment

In the United States the 1960-70s CE, despite [and in part because of] periodical psychopolitical strains such as the Vietnam War, generally represented a period of flourishing liberalism and freedom in personal affairs. Exploration and innovation were tolerated and encouraged in society. It was a time of breakthroughs in civil rights; of increased respect for racial, ethnic, sexual, and religious groups. There was controversy; but on the whole it was constructive and progressive in tone. By the end of the 1970s, despite continued growing pains, Western culture appeared to have moved decisively into the utopian “Age of Aquarius”.

The 1980s, however, heralded a sharp and surprising reversal of this climate into conservatism and intolerance. The most primitive, fundamentalist branches of Christianity gained converts and sought political power. And controversial minority groups were assaulted with fresh waves of discrimination and repression.

Nowhere did this “new Inquisition” strike more directly than at “New Age” religions in general and at Satanism in particular. Invoking the same despicable tactics that their predecessors used over the centuries against alternative creeds, fundamentalists now began to disseminate hate-propaganda accusing “Satanism” of the most hideous crimes imaginable: human & animal sacrifice, cannibalism, the kidnapping/sexual abuse/murder of children. That none of this was in the least true mattered not at all to the accusers. If the Big Lie could be repeated loudly & often enough, it would catch hold. Suddenly it became dangerous to be an avowed Satanist in communities infected with anti-Satanic hysteria. The witch-hunt eventually spread to several other countries as well, among them the United Kingdom, Italy, New Zealand, Canada, Australia, and Germany.

Why should the same post-World War II generation that had grown up in the open atmosphere of the 60s-70s tolerate, even encourage a relapse into the brutish hatreds and persecutions of the Middle Ages? Perhaps for the very reason that it was a generation unprepared for what might be termed humanity’s “religious impulse”. During the 60s-70s religion was generally dismissed as something quaint and obsolete: superstition embarrassing to an age of science, computers, and Project Apollo. “God was dead”, and Christianity was invoked merely as an excuse for Christmas revelry and other entertainments (such as *Jesus Christ Superstar* & the “Jesus Freak revolution” of 1970). Even the formation of the Church of Satan in 1966 was somewhat anticlimactic: It didn’t arise in response to a “threatening” Christianity - for Christianity already appeared to be a dead horse. The carcass was there to be kicked around a bit for the sake of theatre, but there was no expectation that it had any energy left to get up and kick back.

The “religious impulse” proved to be important to both Satanists and non-Satanists. In the case of Satanists it brought about an increasing interest in exploring the “human equation” and the metaphysical and psychological roots of the great Satanic/*psyche*-centered philosophies of history. Even had Anton LaVey not provoked the crisis of 1975, it is clear that the evolution of Church of Satan into something like the Temple of Set - a completely non-Christianized, positive “high Satanism” - would have proceeded inexorably.

Non-Satanists, meanwhile, found themselves adrift in a society whose Judæo/Christian moral values had disintegrated into materialistic hypocrisy. In such an “arid wilderness of steel and stone”, there arose a longing for “something/anything spiritual” - and the remnants of Christianity were there to offer the appropriate opium after various “New Age” fantasies had been tried and found to be wanting.

In the 1980s, however, there was a difference in Christian evangelism. The new herd of converts had **not** received a gradual education enabling it to see Christianity in at least some historical context. Rather it perceived Christianity as a completely novel experience - and so it was far more vulnerable to Christian propaganda than the previous, more worldly generation had been. The result was an eruption in the 1980s of a fundamentalism as mindless and brutish as that of the Middle Ages. Now, as before, it needed a scarecrow - and “Satanism” was a word with an appropriately scary sound. Christian fanatics who knew [and cared] nothing whatever about **actual** Satanism suddenly embarked upon passionate [and financially profitable] campaigns brandishing the scarecrow before credulous followers.

Complicating the situation was the perennial impulse among alienated youth and antisocial elements to deliberately shock society by flaunting its bogymen. If prudish elements of the community were going to terrify themselves with “scarecrow Satanism”, then Heavy Metal rock music would affect this same image, as would the occasional psychotic criminal and teenage gang. Fundamentalists happily showcased such aberrations as “proof” of the scarecrow’s existence.

The Temple of Set, now the world’s preeminent Satanic religious institution, found itself in the awkward position of having not only to defend authentic Satanism against the shrill screams of the scarecrow-merchants, but also to reject superficial glorification of the scarecrow that would return Satanism’s image to nothing more than anti-Christian “Devil worship”. Both challenges have been addressed, but not without the cost of time and energy drained from the Temple’s own magical and philosophical interests.

By the 1990s the initial danger was largely averted. We were able to establish the truth about Satanism sufficiently to expose the falsehoods of the scarecrow-merchants in all but the most ignorant backwaters of society. That same society, however, continues to flail about for the moral anchor that the large mass-religions claim to offer. Christianity’s strength lies today, as throughout its history, in the **absence** of intellectual education and mental effort which it demands of its sheep. It has also become quite accomplished at exploiting humanity’s fear of death, sexual neuroses, and other irrational hatreds and insecurities.

The new century is therefore a time of challenge for the Temple of Set. Our philosophy has never been more sophisticated, yet we pursue it in the midst of a confused, superficial, and paranoid social environment. It is not the task of the Temple of Set to be a “savior of the masses” - but rather to encourage suitable individuals to apprehend and attain their own divinity. The wisdom with which our Initiates exercise this divinity may well determine whether humanity advances to the stars - or succumbs to the entropy of the universe as one more inconsequential curiosity of nature.

The Setian Philosophy

Since movements dedicated to the Prince of Darkness have been so ill-tolerated by the masses of humanity wherever and whenever they have appeared, why have they survived at all? Why do they continue to exercise such uncanny attraction, and why now should you consider approaching this particular one?

The appeal of occultism is much the same as that of conventional religion: Logical positivism and scientific materialism, though they have made great strides towards explaining the “how” of existence, have failed entirely to explain the “why”. Hence the curious seek answers in metaphysical philosophy or religion. Metaphysical philosophy requires a logical base from which various suprarational principles are induced. Conventional religion is the simplification of such a philosophy into a crude ideology, which adherents need not understand, but only accept as an act of blind faith.

Conventional religions, with their colorful mythologies analyzed in terms of the underlying philosophical principles, represent simply the primitive longing of man to feel “at one” with the Universal harmony he perceives about him. “White” magic, as advocated by primitive pagan and modern institutional religions, offers devotees the illusion of “re-inclusion” in the Universal scheme of things through various ritualistic devotions and superstitions.

The Black Magician, on the other hand, rejects both the desirability of union with the Universe and any self-deceptive antics designed to create such an illusion. He has considered the existence of the individual *psyche* - the “core you” of your conscious intelligence - and has taken satisfaction from its existence as something unlike anything else in the Universe. The Black Magician desires this *psyche* to live, to experience, and to continue. He does not wish to die - or to lose his consciousness and identity in a larger, Universal consciousness [assuming that such exists]. He wants to **be**. This decision in favor of individual existence is the first premise of the Temple of Set.

The second premise of the Temple is that the *psychocentric* consciousness can evolve towards its own divinity through deliberate exercise of the intelligence and Will, a process of **becoming** or **coming into being** whose roots may be found in the dialectic method expounded by Plato and the conscious exaltation of the Will proposed by Nietzsche.

Ironically it is the very ease with which any individual can apprehend and appreciate his or her personal *psyche* that has frightened the many religions of the world which deny and oppose the power of that psyche. Clothed though they may be in riches, ritual, and respectability, they always have been and remain obsessed with the suppressed knowledge of their own essential falsehood. They endeavor to distract attention from this by sponsoring shows of mind-numbing drugs, mantras, masses, privations, entertainments, and penances to coax or cow their flocks of adherents into a confused, apprehensive, but trusting state of faith and automatic obedience. They shudder with horror at the *psyche*; they paint it red and add horns, cloven hooves, and a forked tail to dramatize how “dangerous” it is. Yet they can never escape it or defeat it, because they have never really succeeded in opposing themselves to it - merely in distorting and perverting it. How could they destroy something which, in the final analysis, is the **conscious self of every human being**?

The “worship” of Set is thus the “worship” of individualism. In the Church of Satan this was taken to mean **indulgence** in all [legal] desires of the body and ego. Since many such desires are impulsive and destructive, the Church found itself in the unexpected and awkward position of *de facto* endorsing many practices which were degrading rather than exalting, and which simply accelerated the tensions resulting in the eventual crisis of 1975.

The Temple of Set determined to preserve the principle of individualism, but to add to it the evolutionary “higher self” aspirations of Aleister Crowley’s pre-O.T.O. philosophy of *Thelema*. Glorification of the ego is not enough; it is the **complete psyche** - the **entire** self or soul - which must be recognized, appreciated, and actualized. The process by which this exaltation of the *psyche* is sought is called by the name *Xeper* [pronounced “kheffer”; it is the Egyptian hieroglyphic term for “to become” or “to come into being”].

The means by which Setians seek to *Xeper* are many. As a matter of principle the Temple declines to standardize its approach to Initiates. Each may pursue topics of greatest personal interest with whatever emphasis and at whatever rate desired. The Temple seeks merely to be a forum for Setians to communicate and cooperate with one another constructively and courteously. Many ideas and philosophies are discussed within it, but such discussion does not constitute the dictation of dogma.

Indeed dogma - to include fixed ideology in any form - is repugnant to the Temple. We strive rather towards an atmosphere of “best possible premises”, which are always subject to constructive, intelligent examination and criticism. That same atmosphere is Socratic, however, in that foolish, pretentious, or destructive egotism under the guise of exploration is neither respected nor endured.

While it is obvious that Setians have more than enough interests to occupy an organization with many times our membership and resources on a full-time basis, the Temple of Set is not intended to consume the energies or lifestyles of its Initiates. Since a truly Adept magician must interact constructively and comfortably with conventional society, encouragement of monastic isolation within Temple circles would be counterproductive to personal development and even constrictive of the flexibility necessary to the entire Temple. Setians are accordingly advised to pursue as wide a variety of secular interests as possible, and to let Setian philosophy apply to them only as appropriate.

Setian Magic

Setian initiation includes the study and practice of Setian magic, traditionally termed “Black Magic” - not because it is “evil” but because it is consciously controlled by the magician rather than unconsciously controlling him.

The Temple of Set will help you to understand just what magic is - and indeed there are several types of magic to be learned and distinguished. But as magic enables you to influence or change events in ways not understood nor anticipated by society, before you put it to use you must first develop a sound and sophisticated appreciation for the **ethics** governing your own motives, decisions, and actions. Merely using magic for impulsive, trivial, or egoistic desires is **not** Setian. It must become second-nature to you to carefully preevaluate the consequences of what you wish to do - then choose the course of wisdom, justice, and creative improvement.

Structure and Operation

The deliberately individualistic atmosphere of the Temple of Set is not easily conducive to group activities on a routine or programmed basis. There are no congregations of docile “followers” - only cooperative philosophers and magicians.

Executive authority in the Temple is held by the Council of Nine, which appoints both the High Priest of Set and the Executive Director. Initiates are Recognized according to six degrees: Setian I°, Adept II°, Priest or Priestess of Set III°, Magister/Magistra Templi

IV°, Magus/Maga V°, & Ipsissimus/Ipsissima VI°.

Recognition as an Adept II° constitutes certification by the Temple that one has in fact mastered and successfully applied the essential principles of Black Magic. The bulk of Temple systems are geared to attainment of and subsequent support for the II°, and that is the level of affiliation which most Setians will maintain. It is understood that this is an organizational principle, as each Adept's magical and philosophical evolution will continue as he or she continues to energize and actualize it.

The III°-VI° are properly seen not as further benchmarks of individual attainment, but as specialized religious offices conferred by Set alone, and Recognized within the Temple according to his Will.

The design, care, and operation of the Temple are entrusted by Set to the Priesthood. All Initiates of the Priesthood are originally highly-qualified Adepts in the Black Arts. Most of your contact with them will be in this context. Because they are responsible for the integrity of the Temple as a whole, however, they have the authority both to evaluate and Recognize Initiates' competence and, if necessary, to suspend or expel individuals who have proven themselves incapable of maintaining Setian standards of dignity and excellence. The Priesthood takes all of these responsibilities extremely seriously, since it regards its name literally and its trust as sacred. In this respect it stands significantly apart from conventional religious clergy, who *de facto* consider their "priesthoods" as social professions and their deities as mere symbols and metaphors for their institutional or personal exploitation.

The knowledge of the Temple of Set is made available through four principal avenues: an extensive reading list of published works in twenty-four specialized fields; the newsletter *Scroll of Set*, the publications of the Temple's various specialized Orders; and the series of encyclopædias entitled the *Jeweled Tablets of Set*. The contents of the *Scroll* and the Order periodicals are time-dated, of course, but those of the *Tablets* change periodically as ideas are advanced, improved, or disproved; or as they become more or less relevant to the Temple's areas of concern. The *Scroll*, Order newsletters, and *Tablets* are made available for private membership download from the Internet, with printed copies for Setians without Internet access.

Because of the non-group-oriented design of the Temple, many Initiates are geographically distant from one another. This necessitates an organizational design geared more towards services to the individual than to localized "congregations". Recognizing the value - and fellowship - of a seminar environment, however, the Temple provides for "Pylons" (named after the unique gates of ancient Egyptian temples). Pylons are often geographically localized, but some are "correspondence" Pylons with global membership and interaction. While each Pylon is under the trust and responsibility of a II°+ Sentinel, they are emphatically not "leader/follower congregations", but rather cooperative and interactive forums for individual Initiates. Each new Setian is expected to affiliate with at least one Pylon within a year of admission to the Temple, and Recognition to the II° will normally be recommended and/or formalized by that Pylon.

Individuals admitted to the Temple are provided with a personal copy of the *Crystal Tablet of Set*, which contains a wide range of organizational, philosophical, and magical information pertinent to qualification as an Adept. There is a two-year time-limit for each new Setian to qualify for Adept Recognition. If such Recognition is not received by that time, affiliation is canceled.

The Orders of the Temple are entirely different in concept and operation from its Pylons. Each Order specializes in one or more particular fields of the magical arts and sciences. Such a specialization may be transcultural or oriented to a specific geographic

area, time-period, or conceptual tradition. Within one year after II° Recognition, each Adept is expected to affiliate with an Order reflective of his or her personal interests and aptitudes. The collective knowledge of all of the Orders is available to the Temple membership generally.

Setians may also communicate with one another by means of a regularly-updated InterCommunication Roster, contained in the *Crystal Tablet*, and periodic Conclaves are scheduled on a regional, national, and international basis.

On its public website the Temple maintains basic information about itself suitable for the general public. Within the Temple is a more extensive “Intranet” - essentially a Setian-only website for worldwide membership access. The Temple also operates a number of Internet-based mailing lists for ease of announcements, communication, and discussion.

Personal affiliation with the Temple is kept confidential; your admission is known only to the Priesthood. If you desire to meet other Setians, you may do so under a magical name if desired. In summary, you may apply the services and systems of the Temple as you wish, and as you deem most complementary to your *Xeper*; otherwise they will not intrude upon you.

An Important Clarification

Regretfully there still exist some individuals whose idea of “Satanism” is largely a simple-minded synthesis of Christian propaganda and Hollywood horror movies. The Temple of Set enjoys the colorful legacy of the Black Arts, and we use many forms of historical Satanic imagery for our artistic stimulation and pleasure. But we have not found that any interest or activity which an enlightened, mature intellect would regard as undignified, sadistic, criminal, or depraved is desirable, much less essential to our work.

The Temple of Set is an evolutionary product of human experience. Such experience includes the magical and philosophical work of many occult individuals and organizations which have preceded us. Some of these were socially acceptable by contemporary or modern standards; others were not. Some made brilliant discoveries in one field of interest while blighting their reputations with shocking excesses or tragic failures in others. In examining the secret and suppressed corners of history for valuable and useful material, the Temple **insists** upon ethical presentation and use of such discoveries as it makes. Setians who are in any doubt as to the ethics involved in any of the fields which we explore should seek counsel from the Priesthood. All Setians are further expected to display a high measure of maturity and common sense in this area.

The Black Arts are **dangerous** in the same way that working with volatile chemicals is dangerous. This is most emphatically **not** a field for unstable, immature, or otherwise emotionally or intellectually weak-minded people. Such are a hazard to themselves and to others with whom they come into contact. The Temple endeavors to not admit them to begin with. If such an individual should gain admittance and later be exposed, he will be summarily expelled. In cases of doubt the Temple may be expected to place the burden of proof on the individual, for the sake of all Setians and the Temple’s integrity.

The Temple of Set evaluates conventional religions as erroneous in principle and therefore unworthy of peer status. We feel no need to concern ourselves with their activities, or for that matter to maintain any sort of “diplomatic relations” with them [as in councils of churches]. Our position is that they may serve a useful social function as purveyors of soothing myths and fantasies to humans unable to attain Setian levels of self-consciousness. Hence we ignore conventional religious organizations unless they intrude upon our affairs.

These warnings are not intended to be oppressive or intimidating, but they should be taken **seriously**. The Temple is a forum for the investigation of many subjects which conventional society finds odd, mysterious, and even extremely frightening. The Temple will be tolerated only to the extent that it is known to be pursuing its interests carefully, expertly, and responsibly. It occupies a delicate position in a world which is largely unhappy with itself, and which is ceaselessly searching for scapegoats. Hence the Temple must take care to maintain its social balance with prudence and dignity.

Affiliation

The Church of Satan learned that there were many people who wished to "visit", to "study", and to "observe" without the least intention of a personal commitment. For many years the Church endeavored to accommodate such dilettantes on the assumption that, upon exposure to its philosophy, they would appreciate its essential requirement for such a commitment. Once being in the position to enjoy the "accessories" of the philosophy without having to confront its core principle, however, such persons continued to vampirize the Church indefinitely. They contributed as little as they could, took as much as they could, and ultimately constituted the single most destructive influence leading to the Church's disintegration in 1975.

The Temple of Set has determined that it will not make the same mistake. Its activities, publications, knowledge, and services are reserved for those who affiliate with it, or on an individual-case basis, for non-Setians who request assistance from the Temple that we deem to be in our interests or in the interests of the community as a whole. The First Degree (I°) of Temple affiliation is regarded as a "status of mutual evaluation" wherein the Initiate and the Temple can assess one another's merit from the standpoint of minimum investment and involvement. If a I° Initiate should decide that the Temple is not, after all, appropriate to his wants or needs, he is welcome to depart with our good wishes for satisfaction elsewhere.

Aspirants to the Temple should understand that it is not a club or fraternal society whose principles may be collected along with those of other social affiliations, occult or otherwise. Membership in the Temple of Set beyond the I° precludes membership in any other religious organization.

Members or former members of non-religious occult organizations should understand that within the Temple of Set they will be expected to respect and observe the Temple's protocol, and that literature and other information from the Temple is not to be passed to non-Temple individuals or organizations without prior approval of the Priesthood. If the Temple of Set can assist other deserving organizations or individuals on occasion, it will be pleased to do so. But it must exercise reasonable care over the Temple materials that are made available - both so that our own Initiates may enjoy the fruits of their honest labor [and that of their predecessors] and so that the Temple of Set may continue to enjoy its exclusive reputation for excellence in the disciplines it has pioneered.

Should you have questions which are reasonably pertinent to your serious consideration whether or not to apply for admission to the Temple, you are welcome to address them to the Executive Director of the Temple. If you wish to apply for admission as a Setian I°, there are two avenues of approach available to you:

(1) If you are in contact with a Priest or Priestess of Set, you may request him or her to sponsor your application. In that case you may send a letter to the Executive Director mentioning this sponsorship. With your letter enclose a check, money order, or credit card

authorization for US\$80, payable to *Temple of Set*. [Please note that this amount must be in U.S. dollars, either drawn on a U.S. bank or as an international money order **only**. Or it may be charged to a Visa or MasterCard **only**.] If Priesthood sponsorship is verified, approval is automatic.

Important note: If you are admitted, and if you are an overseas resident, your admission packet will be sent to you by surface mail. Depending upon the destination, this can take as long as two months. If you wish the packet sent via air mail, your application fee should be for the amount of US\$120 to cover the extra air mail postage.

(2) If you are not known to a member of the Priesthood, write a letter to the Executive Director introducing yourself, summarizing whatever aspects of your background you feel to be relevant, and stating your reasons for deciding to seek entrance into the Temple. Enclose the admission fee/card authorization. The Temple will make a decision and respond to you accordingly. If necessary you will be asked for additional information. Should your application not be approved for any reason, the fee will be refunded. Persons applying for admission via this procedure should be as objective and candid as possible in their self-assessment. There is no point in misleading the Temple concerning one's suitability for admission, which will only result sooner or later in the truth coming to light - with the consequent waste of both the individual's and the Temple's time. If there are crucial areas of possible incompatibility, it is incumbent on the applicant to identify them before affiliation so that they may be addressed and, if possible, resolved.

Whichever method you apply through, please be certain to include:

- (1) Your full legal name [no pseudonyms] and sex.
- (2) Your complete mailing address.
- (3) Internet (electronic mail) address if you have one.
- (4) Daytime and evening telephone numbers.
- (5) Photocopy of an identity card (such as driver's license) with your date of birth.
- (6) Present organizational affiliations.
- (7) Visa/MasterCard authorization below if you use either card.

Annual renewal fee for all Initiates is US\$80. [The first year is pro-rated from the month of your entry.] These fees are designed, as is the admissions fee, to cover the cost of services to you and the administration of the Temple. As a matter of policy the Temple is not designed to make a profit on its operations, and its assets are used exclusively for benefits to its Initiates as a whole. There are no other regular or recurring fees, save that Orders and Pylons may set reasonable charges for their newsletters or other time/effort services. Special publications of the Temple and events scheduled by the Temple are customarily made available on a nonprofit basis to Initiates who are interested.

The only physical requirement for admission is that the aspirant be at least 18 years of age. Those below the age of 18 may **not** visit Temple functions, ceremonial or otherwise, whether or not they are relatives of Initiates. The Temple has **no** programs for children. It is our position that children and adolescents should not be indoctrinated into the assumptions and prescriptions of **any** suprarational system, whether it be our own philosophy or the faiths and superstitions of conventional religions. Rather their youthful years should be a time of **exclusively rational** training and education, giving them a sound and meaningful basis by which, as adults, they may consider and choose whatever

philosophy or faith seems most meaningful to them.

If your application is approved, you will receive notification from the Executive Director's office, together with membership identification, certificate, copy of the *Crystal Tablet of Set* [including the current reading list & intercommunication roster, most recent issue of the *Scroll of Set*, and Setian I° pendant medallion].

Thereafter the initiative is yours. The Temple of Set is designed to assist you in the ways we have found to be the most practical, productive, and factually accurate. But, as helpful as the Temple may be, and as proud of it as we are, it is nevertheless properly understood as a **tool**. **You** are the one who must put that tool to use in a way that will enable you to *Xepe*. Such is the Word of the Æon of Set.

To: The Temple of Set

I hereby authorize my application fee of US\$ _____ to be charged to my:

Visa

MasterCard

Print name exactly as it appears on card: _____

Card number: _____ Expiration date: _____

Signature: _____ Application date: _____
